

MASSENA CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT COUNSELING PLAN

Introduction

The Massena Central School counseling department is designed to provide the services of certified NYS school counselors to all students grades K-12. At all grades, counselors work closely with other school personnel, parents and a variety of outside agencies to provide as broad a range of student support services as possible.

Programs and yearly calendars at all three levels (K-6, 7-8, 9-12) are designed to provide information to, review the progress of and map the educational plans for each student. The specific form of the service may include direct one-on-one contact, small group instruction, support groups and the teacher consultant model. Counseling, both mandated and need-specific, as well as crisis intervention, also occupies a significant portion of the counselor's schedule. As appropriate and regardless of the nature of the service, counselors maintain communication with and encourage the involvement of all interested parties including parents, teachers, administrators and other student support professionals.

The following pages describe the primary program objectives and plans for the Massena Central School counseling department, as well as desired outcomes and method of assessment for each objective. This document is intended to be neither inclusive nor restrictive in its scope, but rather is intended as a general and flexible statement of departmental goals and philosophy.

MASSENA CENTRAL SCHOOL COUNSELOR

Qualifications:

1. Hold valid certification to practice as a school counselor in NYS
2. Hold a Masters Degree in counseling from an accredited college or university

Reports to:

Department chair and building principal

General District Objectives

A. Information dissemination - students in the Massena Central School district will be provided with the information and resources necessary to make sound educational, vocational and personal choices.

Strategies K-6

- 1) Provide general and specific information via classroom curriculum and discussions, lifeskills/character education, educational support groups and small group sessions.
- 2) Assist with Junior High orientation programs for grade 6 students.
- 3) Arrange and coordinate programs related to prevention counseling issues such as Red Ribbon Week, etc.
- 4) Utilize school newsletter to publicize counseling information.
- 5) Coordinate special programming and assemblies related to student needs.

Strategies 7-8

- 1) Utilize newsletters, local radio stations, newspaper and school announcements to publicize guidance information
- 2) Provide guidance related information through classroom discussions, group sessions, evening programs, field trips, and utilization of community resource speakers
- 3) Provide sixth grade parents, teachers and students with information that is needed for successful transition to the junior high school, including orientation programs for 6th grade students

- 4) Meet regularly with junior high school teaching team members. Provide teams with useful guidance information and arrange parent conferences when necessary.
- 5) Provide eighth grade students and parents, teachers and students with high school requirements and scheduling information.
- 6) Develop Red Ribbon Week activities each year to promote alcohol and drug free lifestyles.
- 7) Coordinate and implement junior high Career Day with guest speakers on different careers from the community.

Strategies 9-12

- 1) Annually update and create student handbook for grades 9-12
- 2) Provide general and specific career, educational and other guidance related information via classroom discussion, small group sessions, evening programs, field trips and speakers to grades 9-12 students
- 3) Meet yearly in individual or small groups to update academic progress and review four year plan for all students 9-12
- 4) Schedule, administer and interpret standardized tests (PSAT, SAT, ACT - gr. 11; SAT, ACT, SAT II - gr. 12)
- 5) Coordinate and sponsor field trips such as college fairs, college and vocational visits for grade 12 students
- 6) Assist with orientation programs for grade 9
- 7) Create and coordinate peer tutoring networks for students in grades 9-12
- 8) Provide written scholarship information regarding available opportunities to students in grade 12
- 9) Prepare and distribute written materials to students in grades 11-12 regarding careers, post secondary options, timelines, etc.
- 10) Familiarize students individually or in small groups with guidance resource materials, including computer assisted searches, college handbooks, military literature, interest inventories and career information

B. Counseling - students in the Massena Central School District will be provided with individual or group opportunities which enable them to benefit from curricular choices, which assist in the formulation of appropriate action strategies, and which promote effective coping skills. Many of these strategies are similar at all grade levels, varying as is age-appropriate.

Strategies K-6

- 1) Identify and meet with students who are not succeeding based upon poor attendance, grades or other indicators
- 2) Explore choices and the implications of those choices with emphasis on the relationship of abilities, goals and interests
- 3) Assist students in developing decision-making skills
- 4) Provide crisis counseling and intervention services for students in need including referrals from other school professionals and outside service providers
- 5) Provide counseling for students with special needs grades K-6
- 6) Assist students with decision-making, self discipline and coping skills
- 7) Provide educational support group programming for students in need of selective interventions

Strategies 7-8

- 1) Identify and meet with students who are having difficulty based upon attendance, grades and other indicators of academic progress.
- 2) Begin the exploration of educational choices and the implication of those choices with emphasis on the relationship of abilities, goals and interests.
- 3) Provide crisis counseling and intervention services for students in need, including referrals from other school professionals and parents.
- 4) Provide counseling for students with specific needs.
- 5) Assist students with decision-making, self control and coping skills.
- 6) Provide mediation counseling for students in conflict.

Strategies 9-12

- 1) Identify and meet with students who are not succeeding based upon poor attendance, grades or other indicators of academic underachievement grades 9-12
- 2) Explore in detail educational choices and the implications of those choices with emphasis on the relationship of abilities, goals and performances
- 3) Assist students in developing a framework for post secondary planning moving each year to more specific goals as appropriate to the student and grade level
- 4) Schedule individual sessions with grade 12 to evaluate, formulate and assist with post high school plans
- 5) Provide crisis counseling and intervention services for students in need including referrals from other school professionals
- 6) Provide counseling for students with special needs grades 9-12
- 7) Assist students with decision-making, self discipline and coping skills

C. Parental Involvement - parents in the Massena Central School district will be provided information regarding student performance and behavior, educational and career options and will be encouraged to actively participate with school counselors and their child in the planning and decision-making process.

Strategies K-6

- 1) Utilize newsletters, radio announcements, newspapers and school announcements to publicize counseling information
- 2) Contact parents to schedule and facilitate conferences regarding academic and personal issues
- 3) Inform and consult parents regarding student performance, attendance and behavior
- 4) Participate in programs such as curriculum night with appropriate materials for parents.
- 5) Provide parents with local service provider resources, when needed.

Strategies 7-8

- 1) Utilize newsletters, radio announcements, newspapers and school announcements to publicize guidance information and to highlight student opportunities.
- 2) Provide written information to parents regarding student progress, educational opportunities, and school related programs.
- 3) Participate in programs such as curriculum night and orientation programs with appropriate materials for parents.
- 4) Call parents to schedule and facilitate conferences regarding academic and personal issues.
- 5) Develop and share with parents a planned program of study for their child's transition from 8th to 9th grade.
- 6) Inform and consult parents regarding strategies regarding student performance, attendance and behavior.

Strategies 9-12

- 1) Utilize newsletters, radio announcements, newspapers, public relations classes and school announcements to publicize guidance information and to highlight student opportunities
- 2) Provide written information to parents regarding student progress, educational opportunities, college and scholarship data, occupational and career information and school related programs
- 3) Participate in programs such as curriculum night, financial aid night, Open House and orientation programs with materials for parents appropriate to each grade level
- 4) Call parents to schedule and facilitate conferences regarding academic and personal issues
- 5) Inform and consult parents regarding student performance, attendance and behavior

D. Annual Review, Planning and Appraisal - counselors in the Massena Central School District will meet individually or in small groups with each student each year in order to evaluate, assess performance and progress toward student objectives.

Strategies K-6

- 1) meet individually or in small groups to review student progress
- 2) consult with teachers and outside agencies to review student progress

Strategies 7-8

- 1) Meet with 8th grade students to build schedules for 9th grade and to discuss high school requirements.
- 2) Verify and finalize all course selections for accuracy and completeness
- 3) Contact parents as needed regarding course selection and academic progress.
- 4) Maintain current folders, plan sheets and cumulative records for all students.
- 5) Oversee student programming as a liaison between students, parents and school professionals.

Strategies 9-12

- 1) Annually meet in small groups and follow up as appropriate with individual students for the purpose of reviewing credits and planning coursework for the next year including summer school registration if necessary (grades 9-12)
- 2) Meet individually with students in grade 12 to review progress toward graduation and to discuss coursework in relation to post high school goals
- 3) Verify and finalize all course selections for accuracy and completeness (grades 9-12)
- 4) Maintain current folders, plan sheets and cumulative records for all students
- 5) Conduct research activities including graduate follow-up, senior class plans, student activities and academic trends
- 6) Oversee student programming as a liaison between students, parents and school professionals

E. Support Services and Consultation - counselors in the Massena Central School district will provide the appropriate services to support, facilitate and coordinate a student's ability to utilize the resources available in the school district.

Strategies K-6

1) Coordinate and facilitate the flow of information between teachers, parents and outside agencies

2) Provide administrators and teachers with relevant student information necessary for planning appropriate programs and services

3) Represent student's and district's interests to groups such as CSE, probation, treatment facilities, social services

4) Act as resource agents to teachers, parents and administrators

5) Ensure that students enrolled in full day alternative settings receive all services provided to students enrolled in regular school settings.

Strategies 7-8

1) Coordinate and facilitate the flow of information between students, teachers and tutors if appropriate in the event of absences, illness or injury

2) Provide administrators and teachers with relevant student information necessary for planning appropriate programs and services

3) Schedule and facilitate parent, teacher, student conferences

4) Collect information and coordinate the efforts of parents, teachers and students in the selection of appropriate academic programming

5) Represent student's and district's interests to groups such as CSE, probation, treatment facilities, college admissions personnel, social services.

6) Identify and select students for various enrichment activities such as PATS, STEP, Upward Bound, and Horizons.

7) Act as resource agents to teachers, parents and administrators

8) Assist in tracking students in need of academic support services

9) Identify and select students to be matched with adult mentors from the community.

10) Assist in the generation and refinement of the master schedule for the upcoming school year.

11) Advise and register appropriate students for summer school

12) Ensure that students enrolled in full day alternative settings receive all services provided to students enrolled in regular school settings.

Strategies 9-12

1) Coordinate and facilitate the flow of information between students, teachers and tutors if appropriate in the event of absences, illness or injury

2) Provide administrators and teachers with relevant student information necessary for planning appropriate programs and services

3) Collect, compile, evaluate and mail college applications for seniors

4) Schedule and facilitate parent, teacher, student conferences

5) Collect information and coordinate the efforts of parents, teachers and students in the selection of appropriate academic programming

6) Represent student's and district's interests to groups such as CSE, probation, treatment facilities, college admissions personnel, social services and college scholarship committees

7) Identify and select students for various enrichment activities such as Link Crew, Learn To Lead, Boys and Girls State, and a host of leadership conferences for grades 10-12

8) Act as resource agents to teachers, parents and administrators

9) Assist in tracking students in need of academic support services, including summer school

10) Creation and refinement of master schedule for upcoming year.

11) Creation of June (and January if needed) exam schedule of each school year.

II. Assessment

Assessment of the impact of counseling services is as varied and individualized as the services themselves. Success of a particular program or effort may not always be

empirically evaluated with any degree of accuracy nor are we always able to determine impact immediately. Ours is a service which is both subjective and long-term in its impact.

In the case of information dissemination, goals have been met if:

- 1) parents and students have access to the relevant data which is available and pertinent to any particular circumstance
- 2) data is provided in clear and understandable terms
- 3) information is presented in a timely and comprehensive fashion
- 4) the material provided facilitates and enhances student performance and opportunity

Successful counseling efforts may in many cases, be judged by the criteria stated above with these additions:

- 1) Did the counseling enhance the student's ability to utilize the information and resources available in order to facilitate the decision-making process?
- 2) Do students express a feeling of comfort and acceptance within the counseling process?
- 3) Did counseling efforts directly or indirectly lead to improved performance or perceived sense of success?

Strategies for parental involvement would appear to be successful if:

- 1) an open flow of information and ideas exists between the counselor as a representative of the district and the parent
- 2) parents express comfort with their relationship with the school counselor
- 3) parents understand their role in ownership of their child's educational growth

Annual planning and review should ensure that:

- 1) the goals stated above are and continue to be appropriate
- 2) the strategies specified for each goal appear appropriate and effective
- 3) student records are maintained clearly and accurately
- 4) student progress toward stated goals is as successful as is reasonably possible
- 5) state and local mandates are being met.

Qualifications:

1. Hold a current certificate to practice as a school counselor in New York State.
2. Hold a minimum of a Masters Degree in Counseling and Guidance from an accredited college or university.

Reports to:

Guidance Director and Building Principal (shared responsibility)

Performance Objectives:

I. Pupil Counseling (personal, educational, vocational)

- 1) Schedule and carry out individual and/or group counseling sessions to ensure personal contact each year with each student.
- 2) Focus efforts on creating a safe and accepting climate in the Guidance Resource Center and school building.
- 3) Counsel pupils referred by other professionals in the school.
- 4) Counsel potential dropouts and pupils experiencing academic failure based on report card marks.
- 5) Counsel pupils concerning relationships of abilities, goals and performance.
- 6) Assist students in decision-making with examination of all appropriate options and alternatives, both in and out of school.
- 7) Provide ongoing counseling for pupils with special needs.
- 8) Assist pupils in developing self-discipline and coping skills.
- 9) Schedule individual sessions with all seniors to evaluate and assist with post-high school plans.
- 10) Provide crisis counseling and intervention for students in need.

II. Disseminating Information

- 1) Utilize newsletters, local radio stations, newspaper and school announcements to publicize guidance information.
- 2) Provide guidance related information through classroom discussions, group sessions, evening programs, field trips and utilization of community resource speakers.

3) Familiarize students with Guidance software and reference material - to include Guidance Direct, etc.

4) Disseminate information to include: college and scholarship data, occupational and career information, testing, local educational opportunities, and information regarding special school programs and courses.

5) Provide administrators and teachers with relevant information about individual pupils that is needed for planning and providing appropriate school programs.

III. Program Planning

1) Coordinate the efforts of individual pupils, parents and teachers in selecting an appropriate academic program.

2) Utilizing group guidance techniques, with individual followups, counselor will register pupils for courses each year. Preliminary registration will be completed in early spring, revisions to be made through the end of the school year.

3) Complete necessary materials for programming including computer scheduling.

4) Develop a planned program of study for each pupil. The program will be outlined on a "plan sheet."

5) Solicit and consider teacher recommendations regarding course selection and level of study. Final decisions rest with parents.

6) Oversee student programming process, making appropriate modification where necessary.

7) Provide social placement or scheduling for those pupils with unique needs within the available educational setting.

8) When new pupils enter the school, the counselor will schedule the pupil in the appropriate program to meet his educational needs.

IV. Data Collecting and Pupil Appraisal

1) Maintain guidance folders and cumulative record cards on each pupil.

2) Assist administration in planning, administration, and interpreting standardized tests.

3) Solicit teacher assistance in collecting data regarding pupils to be utilized in writing recommendations to colleges, potential employers, and armed services representatives.

4) Complete transcript information and write recommendations and forward same to proper agencies when requested.

5) Assist in limited research activities including followup of graduates, assessing curricular needs, senior class plans, pupil eligibility for selected scholarships, and job opportunities.

6) Articulate pupil needs/requests to the administration and serve as pupil-parent advocate.

- 7) Account for each pupil's program of study by ensuring that appropriate courses and units are recorded and current.
- 8) At the end of each marking period, counselor may review report card marks in order to counsel those pupils experiencing academic difficulty
- 9) At the beginning of each year and throughout the year, as referred, the counselor will become aware of students who have special academic needs.
- 10) Assess pupil educational-personal development for the purpose of establishing eligibility for appropriate scholarships and awards.
- 11) Collect data regarding scholarship winners, college acceptances, and other information pertinent to each class.

V. Consulting

- 1) Through group and individual contacts counselor will assist parents in understanding growth and academic progress of their children.
- 2) Act as resource to teachers in presenting, diagnosing, and remediating pupil problems affecting pupil classroom performance.
- 3) Provide administration with information regarding pupil needs, and developmental data when requested.
- 4) Arrange case conferences involving parents-teachers-administrator-counselor-probation officers, social services representatives, school psychologist, etc. as appropriate in order to discuss pupils' academic problems.
- 5) Act as consultant to community human service agencies on matters of human growth and development.
- 6) Represent school as contact person with outside agencies including college admissions personnel, armed services representatives, BOCES personnel, employment service workers, and scholarship selection committees.
- 7) Serve on school and community committees that study the educational-vocational needs of pupils.
- 8) Consult with department chairpersons and administrators in curriculum planning.
- 9) Refer pupils, in accordance with established procedures, to other pupil personnel services, to other staff members, and to out-of-school resources.
- 10) Meet with the school Committee on Special Education when applicable.

VI. Professional Development (to keep pace)

1. Participate in professional enrichment experiences each year for the purpose of keeping current. Examples include:
 - a. Financial Aid workshops (ACT, CEEB)
 - b. Workshops on college admissions (SUNY & Private)
 - c. Programs for pupils with special needs.
 - d. SED, Bureau of Guidance Regional Workshops
 - e. BOCES meetings for counselors
 - f. I.B. Workshops

g) Counseling skills/knowledge updating workshops

2. Participate in college and industrial visitation to establish first hand contacts with personnel and "on site" experiences.

3. Review contemporary guidance literature as it applies to the effective delivery of services to Massena's pupils.

4) Share information and skills gleaned from meetings and workshops with other members of the guidance department.